

July 11, 2025

Lauderhill City Commissioners

Mayor Denise D. Grant

Vice Mayor Sarai “Ray” Martin

Commissioner Richard Campbell

Commissioner Melissa P. Dunn

Commissioner John T. Hodgson

3300 Inverrary Blvd.

Lauderhill, FL 33319

Re: Opposition to Zoning Exemption Request for Outdoor Fuel Storage within 500 feet of 3501 NW 16th Street, Lauderhill, FL 33311 (Resolution No. 2025R-07-128)

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of Prisma Properties, LLC, the property owner of the parcel located at 3501 NW 16th Street in the City of Lauderhill. Our tenant, Stone Systems of South Florida, LLC, a natural stone fabrication business, operates a facility on this property. We are submitting this letter in strong opposition to the zoning exemption request submitted by Sharp Energy, Inc., which seeks to allow the outdoor storage of gasoline, oil, and other fuels within 500 feet of our property.

This request poses serious risks to public safety, environmental integrity, and the operational viability of our tenant’s business. It also jeopardizes our contractual relationship with the tenant and may negatively impact the long-term value and insurability of our investment. We urge the Commission to deny the exemption for the following reasons:

1. Violation of Zoning Intent and Precedent

The City of Lauderhill’s Land Development Regulations, including Schedule A and B, have historically prohibited or restricted outdoor storage of hazardous materials in nonresidential districts. Granting this exemption would undermine the intent of these regulations, which are designed to protect businesses, residents, and the environment from incompatible and dangerous land uses.

2. Fire and Explosion Risk

Outdoor fuel storage introduces a significant fire hazard, especially in an industrial area with frequent truck traffic, machinery, and customer visits. Our tenant’s facility operates daily with employees, delivery drivers, and customers on-site. The presence of flammable materials nearby increases the risk of catastrophic incidents.

3. Environmental Hazards and Weather Vulnerability

Lauderhill is prone to heavy rainfall, hurricanes, flooding, thunder and lightning. Outdoor fuel storage in such conditions could lead to leaks, spills, or runoff,

contaminating nearby properties, including ours, and potentially entering stormwater systems. This poses a threat to public health and the environment.

4. Operational and Financial Impact.

The proximity of hazardous materials could:

- a) Disrupt our tenant's operations due to safety concerns or emergency response requirements.
- b) Increase our insurance premiums or limit our coverage.
- c) Lower our property value, making our site less attractive for future investment or expansion.

5. Inadequate Safety Planning and Site Design Concerns

Outdoor fuel storage typically requires containment systems, fire suppression, and environmental safeguards. It is unclear whether the applicant has proposed or can maintain such infrastructure, especially in an outdoor setting exposed to the elements. The application and site plan submitted by Sharp Energy, Inc. reveal significant deficiencies in safety planning and infrastructure:

- a) **Proximity of Large Fuel Tanks:** The site plan includes multiple large LPG storage tanks, including two 30,000-gallon tanks and one 1,000-gallon tank, with a future tank planned. These are located within close proximity to neighboring industrial operations, including our tenant's fabrication shop. The risk of explosion, fire, or hazardous leaks is substantial, especially in a high-traffic area.
- b) **Insufficient Buffering and Setbacks:** While the plan claims compliance with minimum setbacks, the actual distances between fuel tanks and adjacent properties are minimal and do not provide adequate protection in the event of an accident or natural disaster.
- c) **Lack of Storm Resilience:** The site is located in a flood-prone area, and the application does not demonstrate sufficient stormwater management, hurricane protection, or spill containment measures. Outdoor fuel storage in such conditions poses a serious threat to surrounding businesses and the environment.
- d) **Limited Public Access and Oversight:** The application states that the site will not be open to the public and will have limited staffing. This raises concerns about emergency response readiness, especially during off-hours or weekends when fuel deliveries may occur.
- e) **Future Expansion Risks:** The inclusion of a "future" 30,000-gallon tank suggests planned expansion of hazardous storage without a corresponding review of cumulative impacts. This piecemeal approach to permitting undermines the integrity of the zoning process.

6. Procedural Irregularities and Due Process Concerns

- a) **Improper Transfer of Special Exception:** According to the Development Review Report, the Land Development Regulations do not permit the transfer of special exception approvals. Yet, the current approval appears to be a continuation of a previously expired approval, without a full and independent review of the new applicant's qualifications, safety protocols, or operational impacts.

- b) **Lack of Timely Notification and Participation:** As the property owner of a parcel located within 500 feet of the proposed hazardous storage site, we should have been notified and given the opportunity to participate **prior** to the Zoning Advisory Board's review and recommendation. This failure deprived us of the opportunity to present our objections at a critical stage of the process. Now, the City Commission is relying on a recommendation that was made **without consideration of our concerns**, undermining the fairness and transparency of the proceeding.
- c) **Failure to Adequately Consider Adverse Impacts:** While the Development Review Report acknowledges that the proposed use “can adversely impact the public safety, health, and general welfare,” the mitigation measures proposed (fencing and cameras) are insufficient to address the real and substantial risks posed by outdoor fuel storage in a hurricane-prone area.
- d) **Premature Approval Without Site Plan Compliance:** The approval is contingent on future site plan submissions and compliance with safety and environmental standards. Granting the exemption before these critical safeguards are in place is premature and exposes neighboring businesses to unnecessary risk.

7. Precedent and Community Impact

Approving this exemption could set a dangerous precedent for similar requests in the future, eroding the integrity of the zoning code and exposing other businesses and residents to similar risks.

In light of these concerns, we respectfully request that the City Commission vote against the approval of this Special Exception pending a full and transparent review process that includes input from all affected stakeholders.

Thank you for your consideration. We are available to provide additional information upon request.

Sincerely,

/s/Annette M. Rasco
Prisma Properties, LLC.
arasco@cosentino.com